

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Handishop Industries, Inc.

#### Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center

#### Handishop Industries, Inc. Keeps Tools Handy

##### Client Profile:

Handishop Industries, Inc. provides employment opportunities for people with disabilities through vocational rehabilitation. In addition to recycling cardboard boxes, company employees bag parts for numerous manufacturers. The company employs 105 people at its facility in Tomah, Wisconsin.

##### Situation:

Handishop Industries' President Joe Greene was introduced to the Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center, NWMOC, a NIST MEP network affiliate, at a Rehabilitation for Wisconsin Conference. When Handishop Industries reached capacity, Greene called the NWMOC for help in streamlining their processes.

##### Solution:

NWMOC provided Lean with Legos workshops for all employees, and the staff began designating 'homes' for their tools, parts, and equipment. After several 5S (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) events, they regained considerable production floor space while increasing production. Value Stream Mapping events assisted in balancing their production with social services needs. Using Lean principles, the employees modified workstations by cutting openings in the table tops to allow for easier access to package labels and box-sealing tape dispensers. Work tables were rearranged in a square instead of a line to facilitate dispensing of inventory. Measuring sticks previously used to mark the stack levels of cardboard boxes were replaced with sheets of plywood that not only designate the levels but also help keep the stacks neat and orderly. Handishop's Lean team member Ryan Tichenor said, "The cost of implementation was low with a great increase in production." "Lean opened our eyes to thinking outside the box and made us more efficient," commented Business Manager Patty Clark. "We were just making things too complicated," added Tichenor. "What we mostly needed to do was to label things and designate a home for them." With NWMOC's assistance, the company's client material handlers are now able to do three jobs instead of only one. One person cleans work areas instead of eight people, the production floor is cleaner, and they have a more efficient flow.

##### Results:

- \* Realized cost savings of \$4,000 in labor and materials.
- \* Realized cost savings of \$15,000 in energy and overhead.
- \* Increased productivity by 20 percent.
- \* Increased throughput from 30 percent to 50 percent.
- \* Increased floor space by 25 percent.
- \* Improved employee and client morale.

##### Testimonial:

[www.mep.nist.gov](http://www.mep.nist.gov)



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"NWMOC helped us remove all obstacles for the clients we serve."

Joe Greene, President/CEO